

Dateline ERS

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Economic Research Service

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ERS is a primary source of economic research and analysis from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, providing timely information on economic and policy issues related to agriculture, food, the environment, and rural America.



Commodity Markets and Trade

ERS Outlook reports provide timely analysis of major commodity markets and trade.

This Month

- Rice
- Feed
- Wheat
- Oil Crops
- Vegetables and Melons
- Sugar and Sweeteners
- Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry
- Cotton and Wool

All reports along with a calendar of future releases are available at:

www.ers.usda.gov/publications/outlook

An Analysis of the Limited Base Acre Provision

www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/EIB84

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 eliminates direct and countercyclical payments (DCP) and average crop revenue election program payments to farms with 10 or fewer base acres. *An Analysis of the Limited Base Acre Provision of the 2008 Farm Act* examines the effects of the provision. Findings suggest that Federal budgetary savings from the provision are small. Based on the 2008 enrollment rate, 148,400 farms would no longer receive DCP, with estimated savings of \$11.7 million in 2009. The effect of the provision varies among U.S. regions as a larger proportion of farms with small base-acre holdings are found on or near the East Coast.



How Americans Rate Their Diet Quality

www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/EIB83

Over the last 20 years, awareness of diet-related health concerns has become widespread in the United States as obesity, along with its associated human and financial costs, has increased. *How Americans Rate Their Diet Quality: An Increasingly Realistic Perspective* finds that there is a heightened realism among Americans about their own diets, and examines how perceptions of diet quality vary with food expenditures, the availability of certain foods like dark green vegetables, and eating patterns.

A Pumpkin Shortage? Here's the Scoop

www.blogs.usda.gov/2011/10/14/a-pumpkin-shortage-here%E2%80%99s-the-scoop

How worried should Charlie Brown be? Is there any truth to what some are calling the Great Pumpkin Shortage? In this recent USDA blog, ERS researchers present the most current information for this year's pumpkin supply.



Rural America at a Glance, 2011 Edition

www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/EIB85

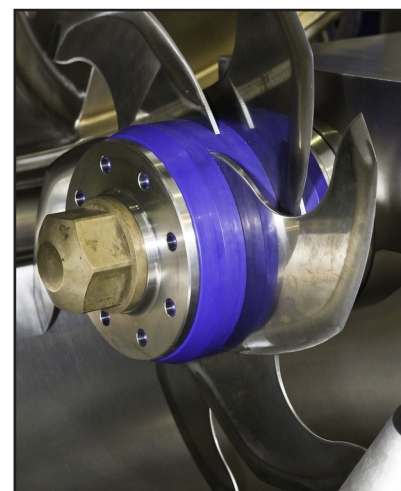


Rural America At A Glance, 2011 Edition highlights the most recent indicators of social and economic conditions in rural areas for use in developing policies and programs to assist rural areas. This year's edition focuses on the U.S. rural economy, including employment trends, poverty, education, and population trends. After improvements in 2010 and in the first quarter of 2011, the nonmetro unemployment rate stabilized at 8.2 percent in the second quarter. However, it appears that post-recession improvements in the unemployment rate largely reflect declining labor force participation rates rather than job growth. The recession's impact was reflected in the nonmetro poverty rate, which increased from 15.1 percent in 2008 to 16.6 percent in 2009. Poverty rate increases were particularly high for children and female-headed households. Over the last decade, population in nonmetro areas grew by 4.5 percent, less than half the growth rate in metro areas.

Food Safety Audits

www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/EIB82

A food safety audit—a quality control tool in which an auditor observes whether a plant's processing practices and technologies are compatible with good food safety practices—can indicate how effectively food safety technology is being used. In *Food Safety Audits, Plant Characteristics, and Food Safety Technology Use in Meat and Poultry Plants* ERS documents the extent of food safety audits in meat and poultry processing plants and examines the association between the use of audits and the plants' size, business structure, and application of food safety technology. The report finds that larger plants, plants subject to food safety audits, and plants that are part of a multiplant firm use more food safety technology than other plants. Plants subject to both plant-hired and customer-hired audits had greater technology use than single (plant- or customer-hired) audit plants.



Distillers' Grains for Livestock Feed

www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/FDS/2011/09Sep/FDS11I01

Production of corn-based dry-mill ethanol and its coproducts – notably distillers' dried grains with soluble (DDGS) – have surged in recent years. This special outlook report estimates the potential substitution of DDGS for corn and soybean meal in livestock feeding and the impact of substitution upon the U.S. feed complex.

How to get more information...

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